

DISPOSAL OF FLUORESCENT TUBES IN LARGE QUANTITIES

The acceptable risk level for mercury is 0.9 ppb (0.0009 mg/kg or mg/l) for disposal on a H:H waste site, and even if the concentration in the waste is lower than this, it may only be disposed of on a H:h landfill site if the concentration in the waste is less than 0.009 ppb (9×10^{-6} mg/kg or mg/l) AND the mercury component is less than 1% of the total waste stream.

Fluorescent tubes collected in large quantities are considered **extremely hazardous waste**, since it contains approximately 2 mg/kg of mercury, which is a known carcinogen. It may therefore **only be disposed of on a H:H waste disposal site**, and only after treatment. This treatment involves the addition of a 50% sodium sulphide – 50% sulphur solution in a – 50% Sulphur solution in a 1:10 (vol/ vol) ratio to the tubes crushed under controlled condition in drum.

From a general prospective, since all industrial waste is considered hazardous unless proven non- hazardous by the generator (classified), and since the permit for the general site specify the Permit Holder must be aware of the content of waste loads disposed of at his site, such Permit Holder may accept **only domestic waste** for disposal at his site. Under certain circumstances, where the Permit Holder has submitted an application to the Department for the disposal of certain types of industrial waste and of that waste. However, based on the above discussion regarding mercury, such approval will not be given **under any circumstances** for the disposal of fluorescent tubes collected in large quantities.